

This Old House

take
a tour!

19
all-American
room redos

Easy upgrades
that say

welcome home

→ paint combos, plant schemes,
porch details, and more

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shrubs
for your
front yard
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same house,
new look

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countertop appliances

> punchy painted
cabinets

> 17 front-door
colors that pop

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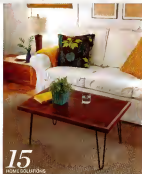


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Cover Photography: GILAN L. BLOOM
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letter {from This Old House}

Why a DIYer's work is never done

I saw it in my wife's face. She looked grave as she clutched the phone to her ear. I knew she was hearing the worst news I could imagine. She didn't speak, but I could make out her mother's voice, frantic, on the other end of the line. My wife nodded once, her face, hung up, and turned to me.

"It's my parents—they've bought a country house," she said. I gasped.

I understand more people would see this as good news. But, then, I am not most people, am I? I am (arguably) the (conscience) barely sane-at-law of lifelong apartment dwellers who have finally bought a house—about which the only thing all of us know for sure is that it doesn't come with a superintendent.

Don't get me wrong. My in-laws are wonderful people, and I know they'd never expect me to do a lick of work on their new place. But it's not what they expect that concerns me; it's what I think right and wrong to be, and I think it's most definitely wrong to let family pay a stranger for something that I can do for much less. (A joke? I actually mean for free, if you're reading this, Father-in-law...) And so I have a new job. Actually, I have two new jobs, because not too long before the phone call from the in-laws I'd gotten one from my brother. "Yeah," he said, "we're redoing my basement. See you Saturday." Click.

And there it was, with a ring or two of the phone, my DIY life assembly altered. See, when you're busy calling good news it's bad news to me because it means our own remodel, so close to being done, will be still not done that much longer. I'm guessing that I'll get to work on our place maybe once every third weekend. It means that a bare bulb will dangle in the hall closet until the costs to patch it are out of style. Guys will be greeted not only by me but also by a hole in the foyer wall from when I removed the doorbell and that I still haven't found time to patch it (yes, due to the big curb-appeal project I had planned [and for which you'll find inspiration on page 66] will have to be scotched back to, ah, adding house numbers, and that I'll keep my tools in the back of the car, perhaps forever. See, last week, a star architect of a whole batch of convincing hammering and prying (and a little bit of cutting), my brother and I had added a single 2x4 to a new partition wall in his basement. If that keeps up, I might not even have time for the house numbers.



The color takes on an ambitious new project.

THREE THINGS I LEARNED FROM THIS ISSUE

1. How a salvaged barn patio can light up your life (p. 47)
2. How old coffee grounds can freshen up your fridge (p. 16)
3. How a tree stump can become a flowering garden asset (p. 88)

Scott Danielian, Editor
thisoldhouse.com

checklist

{ March 2012 }

EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HOME RIGHT NOW

□ Prune dormant fruit trees

Ensure that bearers put out a healthy crop by pruning them early in March. Trim apple and pear trees so that the main trunk runs up through the tree and lateral branches are thinned into a Christmas-tree shape. Cut back, plane, and other stone fruit trees so that instead of a main trunk you have three or four big limbs with an open center and all growth directed upward and outward.



□ What's on your checklist?

"I'm going to encourage birds to nest as far as possible by hanging a net bag full of bits of old newspaper, straw, and other dry, loose material, like pine needles, in the trees."

—Carol Willett, Seattle
E-mail us your ideas at checklist@theoldhouse.com



✓ Plant some luck

Get into the St. Patrick's Day spirit by getting up shamrocks or clover. Line bright windowsills with lucky shamrock (*Oxalis reginae*), shown here, a sun-loving plant with delicate white flowers. If you get indirect light, try deep-violet purple shamrock (*Oxalis traugottii*), or, for a quick dose of greenery, plant red-clover (*Trifolium pratense*) seeds, which can sprout in about a week.

A shamrock is a good luck charm for March.

□ Get paperwork in order

March is Open House Your Home Office Day—so don't forget to declutter while you're spring cleaning. Toss outdated appliances, warranties and contract policies, as well as statements for any loans paid off, now or in a year ago. Then, to make filing this year's taxes easier, set aside 2011 investment statements and any bank documents that include deductible purchases.



□ Clean vent-hood filters

Your range hood's filter may lie oil of sight, but it shouldn't stay out of mind. Remove greasy buildup, a potential fire hazard, at least every six months. Pop out the filter—it should look like puckered foil or metal mesh—and run it through the dishwasher or soak it in a solution of Murphy Oil Soap. If stubborn gunk lingers or you find tears, get a replacement that matches your hood's make and model.



□ Patch up garden pots

If any terra-cotta containers got mindlessly left out in the cold, you may find cracks in the porous material, the result of water's freeze-thaw cycle. Luckily, the fixers are easy to fix. First scrub the clay surface with water; then use a skin to slightly pop open the cracks and fill with clear waterproof silicone caulk. Wrap with sandpaper and lighten with paint to help seal the gaps as the caulk dries, then scrape away any excess for a neat job. Now get ready to plant some springtime color.



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Start planning now for a relaxing outdoor retreat



Patios:

How to lay a stone or brick patio
How to build a brick patio



Seating:

How to build a garden bench
How to build a garden bench

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Home and family. The deep well of feeling those themes evoke was never illustrated more vividly than in our readers' warm responses to a recent column by editor Scott Omsick. We share a few nuggets here, along with praise from grateful renovator and a carpenter's gripe about our choice of terminology.

Kitchen islands

I've been a fan of *The Old House* since its inception. Your content has assisted me since then. Some-how, you surprised me again with "All About Kitchen Islands" [November/December 2011, page 106]. Although I get all the product and design catalogs, then clip and tape, I can't achieve what you do. The product-company articles have helped me time and again to make hard decisions. Thank you so much.

—JOHN DELLOS HAMPTON, IL

A nail by any other name

Please tell your editors that they're called finish nails, not finishing nails [I know I'm right on this—I've been a finish carpenter for 30 years].

—JEDDOGH FORSTER NJ

The editors reply: We love that you brought up this issue, Jeff. TGH editors (carpenters among them) here

heavily debate from time to time on many a term of art. Colloquially, whether you say "finish nail" or "finishing nail" depends largely on where you are from—part of the casual beauty of language, isn't it? For consistency we had to pick one or the other and opted for "finishing nail" because a number of key reference books list it that way. Manufacturers' marketing copy often uses both terms. So neither is really right or wrong, but we realize we can't please everyone's site.

Scott's new edition

The response to TGH editor Scott Omsick's recent (left) of his last project was truly overwhelming. The outpouring of congratulations, praise, advice, and shared stories was both heartwarming and a humbling reminder of the relationship we're privileged to share with our readers. Our thanks and Scott's to all the world awaits.



We too had planned for the addition of little ones to our family. Everything in our house had been done with a family in mind. All of those decisions seemed like a slap in the face when there was no pregnancy, when every IVF ended in failure. But fortunately I read Scott's letter shortly after birthing our beautiful 5-week old adopted daughter. We are so happy, and I am so happy for you and your wife. And please thank your neighbor for asking you to share your story.

—EMILY MACLELLAN, CALIF

I had to tell my wife that I was crying because of something I read in TGH. She laughed, and I read her Scott's column. Needless to say, we both read our congratulations. This will be the best project you've ever taken on.

—JOSHUA KING OF MAINE

OWG so cool! And he has heart! —JENNYFELLO BLOOMSBURY, N.J.

You will be amazed by the joy of teaching your little guy how to "tutor" you with future projects. Our teenage daughter loves to hear how she can expand the content amount of water to add to a bathtub of concrete mix. And she can!

—HEATHER L. LEBLANC, PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS

As I sit here waiting for the train, expecting to be inspired with the building class in the magazine, I am instead inspired by the most simple and complex of things: Life.

—CORTIS GREEN, NEW YORK CITY

You can read Scott's Letter From The Old House [November/December 2011, page 11] at thisoldhouse.com/mar2012.

The editors, Emily TGH, Jeff Omsick, and Scott Omsick, are the 2nd issue magazine. US \$4.95 (US \$5.95 Canada, Mexico, and elsewhere). Includes your full name, address, and phone number. Published letters are edited for clarity and length.

how to reach us



home solutions

Edited by Jessica Dedele-Polite

inside

10 USES

HEALTHY HOME

FIRE SAFETY

MORE



Hairpin-leg coffee table

Blending rustic wood with industrial metal, this coffee table has a high-end look—but cost less than \$50 to make. The secret: strong hairpin legs, often found on mid-century furniture, now easily available from online auction sites and marketplaces (as well under a Bicqumun). Find a style you like in the right height (for a table like the one shown, you'll need 16- to 18-inch legs). Then top with reclaimed bass wood or any other space boards cut close together and secured to beams; we used three prefinished walnut floorboards, plus a fourth to create a picture-frame trim. For step-by-step instructions, including how to make the polished (though completely optional) edge trim, visit thisoldhouse.com/3342.



Hidden fire hazards

You may consider your home fire-safe, but dangers lurk around your workbench, behind your walls, and right on your kitchen counter. Here's how to extinguish them.

Most of us know you're to leave burning candles unattended or overload our outlets, but floodlight still respond to about \$79,000 house fires every year, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Experts even surprised hazards and how to avoid unwisely leaving the flames.



1. Wiring. "People don't think of wiring as a danger, because it's out of sight behind walls," says Lorraine Clark of the NFPA. But electrical fires have accounted for more than 50,000 home fires a year, plus \$1.5 billion in property damage. And seemingly innocuous acts, like driving screws into walls to hang a mirror, can easily cause wiring. One good fix: Replace circuit breakers with arc-fault circuit interrupters (found in hardware stores for about \$30). These sophisticated devices detect dangerous electrical arcs—abnormal sparks that signal bad insulation or loose connections—and stop them before they start a fire.

2. The clothes dryer. Even if you carefully empty your lint tray every time you dry clothes, the heater will build up inside the dryer cabinet, which holds its heating element, and is usually located at the back or bottom of the machine. If enough lint accumulates there, a blaze can start. To minimize the risk, have pro to clean the cabinet every two years.

3. Excessive sawdust. "The problem with sawdust is that it

doesn't look very dangerous," says Tom Harrod, a field manager for Liberty Mutual. Yet it burns quickly much faster than other kinds of dust, which tend to be less concentrated. If you don't have a good dust collection system (sawdust will accumulate on surfaces, where it can combust), it's a disaster. If you have one, an ultrathin layer of the stuff you're using for trouble. Regularly use a vacuum designed specifically for combustible dust. And don't use compressed air (it can blow sawdust off surfaces, it can propel the dust into the air where it can more easily ignite).

4. Loose outlets. The blades inside electrical outlets loosen over time, something you may notice when you plug in an appliance and the cord falls out.



early. This may seem like little more than an annoyance, but loose blades can generate sparks hot that can lead to fires, says Harrod. Your best bet is to replace outlets as soon as you notice the plug popping in and out.



6. Vintage appliances. That 1930s fan you found in your parents' attic. The industrial light you swapped out for a LED stayed in. The vintage chrome coffee maker from eBay. Old kitchen sink, window grill, and may still use, but they were made according to unforgotten safety codes and may include frayed or damaged wires. Here they're revised and improved with modern equipment that comes with UL marks, signifying that Underwriters Laboratories has vouched for the item's safety in actual use.

—MARTHA FRANK

Illustration: John Deane/istockphoto

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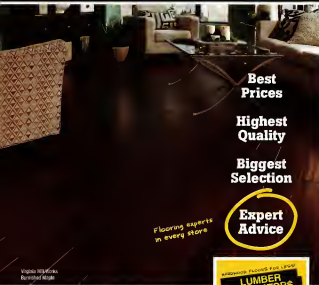
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Same footprint, total DIY redo

With the 2012 Reader Remodel Contest just under way, we take a closer look at last year's kitchen winner to get all the painstaking details. **By DEBORAH SALZBERG • Photographs by JONAS JENSEN**



Professional blueprints and a deed line are always a good idea. But what if you have more time and how-to chops than cash? After 27 years and nine houses, Gregg and Nancy Alling were eager to redo the kitchen in their 1968 house in Toledo, Ohio, but couldn't do it all at once. So they tackled it bit by bit, using little more than his workshop, her eye, and a shared taste for bargains, including a \$4 prep sink found on eBay and \$6 wall scones purchased at a plumbing-supply shop. Custom cabinets, countertops, and trim went beyond the couple's budget—until Nancy had a great idea. “I’d be done all kinds of woodworking,” Gregg recalls her saying. “Why don’t you build these yourself?” Next thing he knew he was leaving about her duties for a cabinet station and sink within arm’s reach of the breakfast table. The couple found black walnut planks for \$400 to make into countertops and dressed out their outdated-down appliances and fixtures, then played on a per flar over the range. The bottom line: \$18,000. Many months of on-the-job learning, and a lot of improvising cooking later, both agree the result was well worth it.



before Countertops and cabinets harked back to the 1960s. **after** For the calling cabinets and trim, light reflecting finishes, a built-in plastic sink, a tiled backsplash, and niches for the fridge, TV, and microwave add function and updated traditional style.

before+after: kitchen

→ Stretch-inspired built-ins topped with solid oak crown-molding and chrome bars with hammer-surface shingles give the eating area finished look. The coffee station fronts off the space with a tile backsplash and a black walnut countertop with 30 coats of varnish.

→ Salvaged leaded-glass cabinet fronts were refinished and used as the focal point.



after

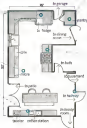
The main island in the peninsula, adjacent to the layout, adds the existing footprint and increases storage and prep space.

before

The 300-square-foot kitchen had four dining chairs and an awkward peninsula that blocked traffic.



- 1 Moved the refrigerator to create 16 square feet of storage space. Built out the cabinet to fully enclose the full-size fridge and a TV.
- 2 Tore out the peninsula to open up the room and improve flow.
- 3 Built in a coffee station and sink in the eating area. Exposed pipes, ducts, and wiring that were first-class.



- 4 Created a gateway in a narrow closet and entry and it into the rooming eliminating space of double doors. Changed double doors to the dining room to a single.
- 5 Created a cooking zone by centering the range in a solid run of cabinets and placed the microwave just above.
- 6 Reduced double doors in the hallway and living room to singles.

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homeowner tip DESIGNING TOUGH SHO

"Before tearing out soffits to run cabinets to the ceiling, be prepared to reroute pipes, ducts, or wiring that might be hidden inside."



→ Redoist shelves and backsides outlets give the coffee station built-in extra function, allowing the heater to disappear behind its own door. (In pull: Death Follower Dust)



→ Existing windows have new shutters to match the glass cabinet doors. The apron sink also has a piece of natural that coordinates with the counter top and reinforces the farmhouse look.



→ Create feet and raised panels contribute to the subtle vintage look. Shag made plywood sides with oak plywood backs, both plywood sides, tops, bottoms, and backs and poster doors drawers, panels and feet. Everything was finished with eggshell all paint and polyurethane.



→ The cooking zone is built into a central, narrow, and built-in coffee station. For a low-cost upgrade, subway tile over the range was applied and framed to create an inset. Overline peninsula floor tile was laid diagonally to visually enlarge the space. (Clockwise from top: Range, refrigerator)

share your remodel
This year's kitchen remodel was a success. Share your story with us on our website. For a chance to win a \$1,000 cash prize, visit www.thisoldhouse.com/remodel.

Adding built-ins and a bonus bath

The creative redesign of a dysfunctional entry area yields welcoming nooks for books and a desk, plus an ingenious box-within-a-box powder room. *by ALEXANDRA MUELLER*

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Sometimes one little request leads to a major transformation. Married homeowners Vicki Ueno and Timothy Weisman-Ueno, owners of an 1870s house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, started out with a new baby and a single post: "We needed a first-floor bathroom with a changing table," says Timothy. But they were also saddled with a dark front entry next to a front room that served as an ad hoc mudroom, and a "measles-causing" narrow staircase. The couple asked general contractor Charlie Allen and architect Margaret Rose to rethink the entire space. "The family's needs were greatest around their front door, the entry wasn't functional, and there weren't designated places to put things once they got inside," Rose says. The team widened the stairs and hall by borrowing space from the front room and added a window to bring in light. Then they turned the room into a stylish home office and library, with a half bath hidden behind two new walls. A closet corals coats and sweaters, cherry shelves built in function, and a warm shade of paint adds personality (says Vicki). "When I peek in at night and see those shelves and the orange glow, it feels so cozy."

Before: The front room served as a mudroom and the adjacent entry hall, and stairs were unhelpful at best. The redesign added the space and added a half bath, plus handworking built-ins that play off this particular building and trim.



before



before
The entry was dark, the stairs were narrow, and the front room was a messy catchall.



after

Two walls moved a set of four windows went up to enclose the bath. The new slightly enlarged room is an office with a closet and bath.

1. **Rebuilt the stairs** and added a window to bring light into the entry area.
2. **Moved the wall** for easier circulation and opened up the dining room. Pickleball! A double door and new wood just made the new home office.



3. **The new cherry built-ins** included new built-in shelves, and mahogany round pool complemented the existing floor and enlarged bath.

3. **Inserted a powder room** off the hallway.
4. **Lined the backs of the bath walls** with cherry built-ins for a linen closet in the office.
5. **Tasked a desk** in the far corner, between two windows. More cherry built-ins line the remaining wall.

4. **The powder room**, about 25 square feet, has a changing table (not shown) and period style glass flanking that flanks a front the fold. Door: John Allen; Sink: First Hand; Mirror: Greenleaf; Paper: The Wall.



4. **Open shelves** were the perfect backdrop for the new desk. The desk's help as a perfect backdrop for paperwork. Fold back window shutters for lighting. Another lightness: make the light. Fold room for a great big window. (Bergstrom's is a built-in.)



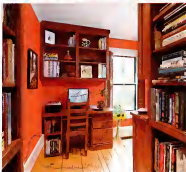
homeowner tip
TAMARA WESLEYAN LIND, CAMBRIDGE, MASS
"Before adding built-ins, make a list of all your needs, whether it's storage for files, shelves for oversized books, display space, or a phone-charging station."



5. **The desk** (not shown) makes use of a corner with natural light. The desk's help as a perfect backdrop for paperwork. Fold back window shutters for lighting. Another lightness: make the light. Fold room for a great big window. (Bergstrom's is a built-in.)

did you redo a room?

Blog at www.bhg.com for more ideas. Or, check out the new book, *Homeowner's Guide to Redoing a Room*, available at www.bhg.com.



\$705 powder-room revamp

A drab half bath becomes a fresh, sophisticated space with a DIY concrete-and-glass vanity top and fixtures found at bargain prices. BY DANIELA HUNTER



(before)



(during)



Some redos take an army, while others are best left as the hands of one enterprising DIYer. Jessie Moore, 37, and the crew of the windowless half bath in her parents' 1960s lake house outside Fort Worth, Texas, fall into the latter category. A tight budget meant he wouldn't be getting the space, but the dated sink and vanity had to go. So after prying off the sink top and backsplash, Justin filled hollow outside-to-interior concrete-and-recycled-glass replacements. He measured the vanity top, then built racks from melamine shelving with cabinets for an undermount sink and glasscock faucet he had already nabbed at bargain prices. He shipped up his own custom measure of cement, sand, pebbles, and recycled glass, then poured four pieces for the counter and backsplash. While the vanity top cured, he caulked the panel down and drilled froths for the countertop. To add an extra bit of sleek, he resealed the existing mirror by sealing a steel frame and having it acid-plated, then painted down concrete to match the handwork, anchoring pointing the walls a cool gray-blue, took about four months, but the bath is now a soothing showpiece. "My parents are really proud," Justin says. "When company comes over, it's the first place they take guests to see."

the project tally:

Powertowers for the counter and backsplash by building blocks and mixing cement, sand pebbles and recycled glass	\$136
Swedeg purchased sink & faucet; acid-treated finished light fixtures by monitoring online auctions	\$190
Updated the vanity with copper doors and drawers for metal look (mixed glass, cement and chrome pulls)	\$15
Guessed up old mirror by welding glass frame and achieving a nickel-plated	\$85
Covered the ceiling with beadboard left over from kitchen redo	\$0
Used one can of gray-blue paint to coat the walls	\$20
Total	\$705

Before: Bath walls were black-painted brick made the bath feel "holier," says Justin during the renovation. Green were painted into walls where they will fit a speckle to new. (DIY) Cost: \$705. Cost: \$705. Cost: \$705.

budget
redo

This Old House blueprint

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Event Spotlight

Bedford Project Wraps



For the 20th season, This Old House TV took on one of the oldest and most storied houses in the show's 32-year history. The northern Page House stood in Bedford, MA. Catch any episodes you may have missed at thisoldhouse.com/bedford



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Shaker-style kitchen

Historically influenced furnishings and handcrafted accents capture the thoroughly modern sensibilities of this cooking-and-eating area. By JESSICA DORRILL-THOMAS • Photography by DEAN BROWN

With its focus on simplicity and practicality, Shaker design offers a period look especially well suited to the kitchen. Case in point: In the space here, wide-plank cabinets coated in milk paint disguise high-tech appliances, while an understated poplar table and chair offer a sturdy dining spot. "This kitchen is a great example of early-19th-century design—yet it's totally up-to-date," says Tim Tamm, who features the space in his new book, *Early American Country Houses* (Kailash Studio). Adding to the space's authenticity are a braided rug, handwoven baskets, and traditional accessories, including Shaker oval boxes and painted redware plates. Read on for the ingredients to create a smaller look in your home. ■

spindle chair

Thanks to its simple frame, this Windsor-inspired seat is just right at home in a country, colonial- or Shaker-style space. \$10, shakerstyle.com

colorful hooked rug

Brighten a room of heavy wood furniture with this vibrant round seat, which features patterned bands with a flat-knit motif. \$170 for a 36-inch-diameter rug, garnettillman.com



walnut-hued basket

Leather ties and wood handles update this woven maple container—a deck alternative to the Shaker fruit bowl. \$40, longsinger.com



six-light chandelier

Progress Lighting's colonial-style fixture adds unexpected elegance to a dining nook. \$224, progresslight.com

rustic pottery

Stack three dishes, such as these redware plates and a milk-painted casserole, then double duty elsewhere when displayed as shelves. Plates, \$27 each; handles, ceramicware.com. Casserole, \$30, countrydeposits.com

weathered lever faucet

Like an old-fashioned water pump with knurled brass handles, this is a family pull-out spray. \$221, theurdirect.com



scalloped hatch top

Our redoubtable first graduate from rapid to keep wild fermenters open shelving. For the sides, use our template (download it at theurdirect.com June 2012), or create your own. Then trace the design onto 3/4" pine boards and cut with a jigsaw. Cut with a jigsaw for rich color. Paint. \$17 per quart, theurdirect.com

round table

Thinning finishes, simply turned legs, antebellum size of this dining surface make it feel stylistically appropriate. \$200, jtc.com



Shaker boxes

These traditional oval containers are crafted from Pennsylvania cherry using templates that ship back to the mail. \$204, \$33–\$40, shakerworkshops.com



Buffing up a Neo-Colonial

A new porch gives purpose and proportion to lanky columns, while new colors boost style
by ERIC HAGERMAN • Illustration by HOWARD DIGITAL



(before)

"We love the long front porch and the pillars, but it's just very plain," says Jason VanderWoods of the 1968 home he shares with his wife, Krisa, and their three children. Unlike most homes in their Genoa Rapids, Michigan, neighborhood, theirs has yet to be renovated.

For ideas on where to start, we turned to architect Jon Sarkinen, from across the state in Royal Oak. The home's builder, he says, must have been going for a kind of Colonial Revival, but they didn't get the proportions quite right. "The columns aren't out of place, but they're too tall and too spindly," Sarkinen says. "To remedy the scale, he looked up the columns and halved their height with a second-story porch that gives them purpose. Of course, as upper porch needs an access point, so French doors replace the window in the master bedroom. "The rest," he says, "are just details so that it looks a little bit more authentic." The VanderWoods are certainly sold. "Oh my word, it's spectacular," says Jason. "We'll have to leave sometime prior to that so we know soon we can get started." ■



The original ground-floor porch meets nothing more than a post-and-beam.

Finishing touches

Reel about details up the Colonial authenticity and introduce a hint of historic charm. 4



paint
Gray with cream-white bands (black oil white) and a pale yellow (deer white) color palette. Benjamin Moore: \$36 per gallon.



sconce
A metal glass sconce with a simple line, pure white and a clear shell enhances the period look. Benjamin Moore: \$179.



front door
Divided light and the geometric pattern, finished by the new panels and columns. Benjamin Moore: \$301.



shutter
Classic round panel wood shutters add a bit of bang for the buck. Sealed Shutters & Doors: \$150 per pair.

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shopping

Colorful kitchen aids

In shades such as tangerine and teal, these small appliances are so cheery, you'll want to leave them on the countertop for all to see. *BY VILLAGA TELLA • Photography: ANDREW MACAUL*

One of the easiest ways to energize a cook space: Add a shot of color. And thanks to a bumper crop of vibrantly hued toasters and small appliances, breathing new life into your kitchen can be as simple and affordable as picking up a toasty-red toaster or an apple-green coffee grinder. Most come with shiny steel or chrome accents to complement your existing fixtures, as well as dishwasher-safe grids, toasters, and bowls for easy cleaning. So read on for 14 bright and handy helpers that'll freshen up your kitchen while adding a little fun to your next-grip routine.

red-hot spring scale

WILLIAMS SONOMA

Green: The removable steel bowl cradles up to 11 pounds of dry goods, meats, and more.

Bonus: The large dial is easy to read.

Cost: \$26

williams-sonoma.com

juicy-green shot maker

DE'LONGHI

Green: It makes espresso with ground coffee or pods, and blends milk for lattes.

Bonus: The top doubles as a cup-warming tray.

Cost: \$300

delonghi.com

juicy-orange mixer

CUISINART

Orange: Its powerful motor may do this, mixer can handle even the densest cookie dough.

Bonus: A slide control lets you select one of the speed settings.

Cost: \$40

cuisinart.com



shopping

cobalt counter kettle DE'LONGHI

Basics: This 1.6-liter electric kettle has a handy steamy-graphic handle. **Basics:** A fine spout spout keeps the water clean. **Cost:** \$60. de'longhi.com

grass-green whistler CASH

Basics: The kettle holds 2 quarts and sounds off when water boils. **Basics:** The pour spout opens when you lift the handle. **Cost:** \$50. cash.com

tangerine toaster DE'LONGHI

Basics: This two-slice model with wide slots has a temperature dial for optimal toasting. **Basics:** It comes with a removable toast rack and a warming rack. **Cost:** \$200. de'longhi.com

fire-engine-red oven HAMILTON BEACH

Basics: It's a got-to-have for your kitchen, plus a wide toasting slot on top. **Basics:** The removable crumb tray is dishwasher safe. **Cost:** \$50. hamiltonbeach.com

sunny lemonade jug TAYMA

Basics: A juice attachment allows you to squeeze lemons directly into the jug. **Basics:** The lid is bright to help you when to change the filter. **Cost:** \$30. taymas.com

violet water purifier SIFA

Basics: This 10-cup water filtration pitcher makes it easy to get rid of heavy metals, such as lead. **Basics:** A digital timer on top tells you when to change the filter. **Cost:** \$33. sifa.com

key-lime mini chopper CUSHNART

Basics: This 24-ounce spin-sawing food processor is like a tiny chopper and grinder. **Basics:** It has dishwasher-safe parts and easy-to-use push-pull controls. **Cost:** \$44. cushnart.com

raspberry blender CUSHNART

Basics: A fairly 40-ounce blender is powerful enough to crush all sorts of frozen ingredients. **Basics:** Use the center of the lid as a 2-cup measuring cup. **Cost:** \$60. cushnart.com



electric-blue mixer KITCHENAID

Basics: It has 10 speeds, a lifting head, and is totally built-in. **Basics:** Comes with 9.5-quart glass bowl with impeller, dough hook, beater, and wire whip. **Cost:** \$250. kitchenaid.com

aqua stick blender CUSHNART

Basics: This 200-watt stick-style blender comes with a stainless-steel mixing pot. **Basics:** You can blend and drink a shake in an attached cup. **Cost:** \$30. cushnart.com

crimson rice cooker HAMILTON BEACH

Basics: The 20-cup-in-one cooker steams, boils, and sautés in a non-stick pot. **Basics:** It automatically shifts to warm mode once it's done. **Cost:** \$35. hamiltonbeach.com

yellow slow cooker PRETTIE DE SUE

Basics: Perfect for dips and dips. **Basics:** This 1.5-quart model has a digital control with a non-slip pot. **Basics:** A built-in lid lock makes it safe to transport for parties. **Cost:** \$25. prettiendesue.com



what do you want us to shop for next?

We'll have the most requested items in July's reader's choice issue. Post your suggestions at kitchn.com/survey/2012

indigo ice-cream maker OUTSMART

Basics: This machine makes 14 quarts of ice cream without any pre-freezing or 20 minutes. **Basics:** Includes a lid and a safe-to-use, dishwasher-safe bowl. **Cost:** \$60. outsmart.com

cherry-red brewer KEURIG

Basics: This compact coffee maker has a 10-cup capacity. **Basics:** Includes a carafe and a 10-cup carafe. **Basics:** Turns on and off after 10 seconds for 10 seconds to save energy. **Cost:** \$50. keurig.com

chartreuse grinder REVOLV

Basics: Holds small amount of beans and grinds the beans into a fine powder. **Basics:** The grinder is made of glass with a high-speed motor. **Cost:** \$200. revolv.com



Limestone floor tile

This luminous, creamy stone evokes earth, sand, and sea. The real deal can be surprisingly affordable, but is a trougher porcelain look-alike a better bet? We weigh the merits.

By DENISE KHALILIAN • Photographs by ANDREW MCCALL

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Vintage pulleys

Used to hoist everything from hay bales to ship sails, pulleys come in an array of styles and rugged materials that make them ideal for reuse both inside and outside the house. By ANDY HUGHES • Photograph by DETH PEDERSEN



Pulleys have been doing the heavy lifting for centuries. Whether in the American barnyard, at the shipyard, or on the assembly line, they've made light work of heavy loads by reducing the effort required to hoist stuff. Simple machines comprising a grooved wheel, called a sheave, inside a wood or cast-iron frame, pulleys can be found in various designs and sizes based on the task they were originally created for.

Among the most common and collectible today are barn pulleys (right) with wood sheaves and cast-iron housings. In the late 1800s, most were used to move hay from horse-drawn carts to loft. They worked in conjunction with ropes, and a grapple fork held aloft by a carrier that moved on a wood or steel track. To the American farmer, this mechanism system was the solution to the back-breaking work of sloping hay with a pitchfork.

Another common pulley is the nautical wood block (above), often





shop smart Pulleys cost from \$3 to \$25. Discover more from local salvage industrial pulley stores or on eBay. Search for "vintage pulley" or "salvage pulley" to find a variety of different pulleys and bunn pulleys.

with a hook on one end. Two or more blocks rigged with ropes form a block-and-tackle system, used for raising sails and loading cargo.

Block-and-tackle well pulleys used to be the most decorative because they were at eye level. "These had a custom shroud and an open iron frame that was often stamped with the star of the pulley," says Doug de Shazer, curator of the Lewis & Clark Pulley Museum, in Coeffort, Nebraska.

By the 1950s, the hay elevator had pretty much replaced the barn pulley system, and the water pump had taken over for the well pulley, says de Shazer. The upside is that recyclers can now find pulleys at flea markets, salvage yards, and auctions, and put them back to work as hangers for potted plants on the porch, wood-block bookends in the den, or as the basis for sturdy portable bookends across the room. I created a light. To make your own light, follow along for the step-by-step.

STEP-BY-STEP

Use a barn pulley to make a wall-mount light fixture

Inspired by a \$300 industrial look fixture in a catalog, I made this sconce for a fraction of the cost using a barn pulley. At \$22, it wasn't the cheapest pulley, but it was clean, had a nice patina, and was stamped "Myers O.S." on the side. Such history is a nice add value and can also reveal a pulley's age—mine dates to the 1920s. A second, smaller screw-base pulley and the metal iron bracket were \$8 at a garage sale, and the cloth-covered cord, brass light socket, and Edison-style bulb totaled \$42 from a lamp supply shop. To protect the bulb and yourself (it can get hot), you might consider adding a metal bulb cage.

Cost: \$177, including two trips to the hardware store to the bracket.
Time: 2 hours
Difficulty: Easy. The only tools you need are a screwdriver and wire cutters.



1. Clean the pulley: To protect the wood shroud and give it a nice sheen, rub with beeswax polish. Linseed or tung oil will also do the trick. Wipe the cast-iron frame with WD-40 to clean it and highlight the metal's patina.



4. Attach the pulley to the bracket: Secure one end of a doubled-up length of twine to the top of the pulley and the other to the bracket using knots of your choice.

2. Wire the socket: Strip 1/2 inch of insulation from each wire to reveal bare copper. Wind the neutral wire clockwise around the socket's silver screw and the hot wire around the brass screw. Tighten the screws, and fit the brass housing over the socket.



5. Add a second pulley: To guide the cord to a well socket, insert the fastener end of a small screw round pulley through the existing drill-out on the lower portion of the bracket.

3. Coil the cord: Fish the bare end of the electric cord through the cast-iron pulley frame and loosely loop it around the grooved wood shroud a few times.



6. Hook up the plug: Once the cord has been threaded through both pulleys, complete the fixture by attaching the plug. The neutral wire wraps around the plug's silver screw, and the hot wire around the brass screw. Congratulations! Your new pulley sconce is now ready to hang.

Project Photography by RYAN DENTON

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Personalize your front door

Ready for more interesting hues than hunter green, colonial red, and basic black? Our color expert offers 17 engaging paint picks to refresh your entrance. BY DEBORAH SALLZWIN

It's the first thing people see and the last one on many homeowners' to choose for: the color of the front door. But if classic green, red, and black have long been the defaults, that's beginning to change. "People are starting to branch out," says Amy Wis, an architectural color consultant in Manalapan, New Jersey. "They realize the color of the front door introduces the world to the people inside, and it can be unexpected and playful." Before you dash off for a quart of neon green, however, Wis recommends stepping back and taking note of the style of the door, along with the trim and siding that frame it. Adding a vibrant shade can make a simple cottage-style door look more sophisticated, she points out, while a casual, bright hue can make a formal facade friendlier and more whimsical. Follow along as Wis offers 17 fresh, striking options.

with neutral siding

Think of the frame as a blank canvas and an invitation to let personal taste prevail. Kemp himself, too, that a door that incorporates a lot of glass (as the four at right do) can keep an otherwise shaded front from being even more living.

out-of-the-box entry colors
1. Peter's Cool Jazz 2. Viper's
Tasty Green 3. Benjamin Moore's
Raspberry Glaze 4. Pratt &
Lambert's Empire Yellow



with neutral siding

(CONTINUED)

Bright orange

This playful color shines against light-colored siding. Sherwin-Williams's Navajo

A burgandy wine

This elegant red goes a simple cottage door with updated trim. Sherwin-Williams's Estate Blue



Cool blue

This color is a real standout on a neutral facade. Sherwin-Williams's Cordoba Blue

Clean green

A contemporary medium green is strong enough to stand up to a classical portico. Sherwin-Williams's Peck

with brick and stone

When siding presents an already complex field of color, best to pick up a hue that's already there.

Honey yellow

This natural shade goes well with siding the color of honey. Benjamin Moore's Golden Honey

Indigo green

This color is seen throughout the door while its yellow undertones echo the pale brick. Benjamin Moore's Bunting Green



A reddish brown

With a red undertone, this color is a real standout on a neutral facade. Sherwin-Williams's Cordoba Blue



with colorful siding

Don't let the door and siding compete. Go for balance by deciding which one gets the biggest patch of color.



Pale yellow

This lovely pastel holds its own and is a lot of bright color. Farrow & Ball's Dreyfus Yellow

Plucky red

Deep red makes a compact area feel bigger. Sherwin-Williams's Snow Shovel



Handsome green

This rich shade doesn't steal the show from the color-finished siding. Benjamin Moore's Country Green



Deep green

Rich blue-green anchors the faded red siding. Sherwin-Williams's Boycott Middle Green



Orange zest

This lively shade references burnt-orange terracotta tiles in the stone facade. Benjamin Moore's Design Orange



Deep eggplant

An elegant blend of red, blue, and brown, this color helps unite the porch's brick. Farrow & Ball's Striped

what's your paint idea?

If you're transformed a space with paint, show us! Enter our Reader Service Contest at www.fox.com

Plan a canine cleaning station

A dedicated washing area for your most dedicated friend makes bath time a breeze. **By KATHY HANCOCK • Photos by Bob D'Amico**

If the idea of bathing your pooch in your prior claw-foot tub gives you pause, as it has, simply won't suffer the indignity of being tossed down in the backyard, a dog-washing station might be the best home improvement you'll ever make. "It's a great addition to a mudroom, so you can clean your dog before he tracks in dirt," says architect Holly Rice of Wilmette, Illinois, who designed the one at right. Though this project can cost \$1,500 or more, Rice's clients say it pays for itself in savings on carpet-cleaning alone. Here are her tips for designing the handy spot.

1. Pick a roomy tub. For all but the largest breeds, Rice uses a one-piece 20-by-20-inch acrylic tub that's no more than 15 inches deep. Mop sinks are ideal, she says, because they're deep enough to keep in water but shallow enough that it's easy to guide your dog inside. Opt for one made of a durable, scratch-resistant material, like terrazzo.

2. Get the height right. A floor-mounted tub allows a dog to climb in, but you'll have to lower to hush him. If you have a small dog, consider installing the tub as a back-to-front ledge and lifting him in.

3. Put the faucet hardware on the wall. It should be easily reachable from the tub's edge.

4. Build a rugged surround. Large-diameter, easy-to-clean ceramic tiles are Rice's go-to choice. You could also use waterproofed beadboard made from solid molding.

5. Include a shelf. A spot for shampoo, soap, doggie conditioner is a convenient finishing touch. ■



secrets to a no-stress bath time

Once you've got the right space to clean up your pup, here are suggestions from the American Kennel Club for keeping the experience a positive one for all involved: • A major fear for dogs during bath time: slippery surfaces. Place a grippy rubber mat inside the tub, and lay a nonskid rug outside or the floor for when the steps out. Keep your dog's nails clipped to help him keep his footing.

► Check the water temperature before you turn the head sprayer on. Fido—it should be no hotter than lukewarm. Use a gentle setting on the sprayer to keep your dog calm while rinsing him.

► When bath time is over, ground him from shaking water all over you by using a microfiber towel to dry his coat quickly.



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From the Editors of **This Old House**



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right details to get the look you want

House huggers

Plantings that ring the base of your home should do more than just conceal the foundation. Here, foolproof planting tips to boost your curb appeal **by GAIL SANDELL**



There is something awesomely stark about the intersection where house meets land—it begs to be softened with greenery. But just bolting that pressure with a tight fringe of evergreens isn't the answer. Neither is a one-scheme fits-all formula. "Two crucial things on either side of the front door with two tall things on either end of the house with lower things in the middle—that's a dated approach," says Anne P. Wilbert, a landscape architect in West Chester, Pennsylvania. "The right foundation planting for most houses is a nice mix of evergreens and deciduous material, with dwarf varieties in order to keep window views open, some repetition of plants for a unified look, and an overall casual, satiated feeling."

Put another way, a successful foundation planting starts with picking the right plants in the right proportions to provide the structural bones of the beds per roseal, deciduous and flowering shrubs to add texture, and perennials of varying heights that yield long-lasting color. Michigan-based landscape designer Jeremy Christensen offers this rule of thumb: About

Varied, wide, and deep
Curved, asymmetrical beds hide open space under the porch and provide color and interest with a mix of flowering and evergreen plants. A mirrored rhythm repeats verticals at the end-way with big acorn oaks to the summer herbs a blue juniper and the leafless azaleas under the bed in every season. Hanging baskets with trailing ivy soften the porch posts and frame the entry.



Tallest in back, shortest in front

Spring-Mowering shrubs brighten this scheme by landscaper architect Christopher J. Cohen, of the New York. Tall hollyhocks are placed nearest the house; shorter azaleas in front, with perennials and double staggered in the foreground. For summer to-fall interest, hosts and clematis stand in the background, and dahlias begin to bloom.

30 percent of the foundation bed's space should be evergreens, 25 percent deciduous and flowering shrubs, and 45 percent perennials. But even then, a good plant can be placed in a bad spot. When you get that beautiful, blooming rhododendron at the garden center in a 2-gallon pot, you have to consider how big it will get over time. Before you plant it a foot from your house, think for a minute. If left all space between the house and your mature plant to allow room for transpiration. This pushes the heat farther from the house, which is what most dieters want, with trees of the house bed 6 to 8 feet deep. This helps improve the view from inside, too," says Wilman.

Lastly, designers agree that a restricted color palette helps give foundation plantings a coordinated, cohesive look. "Too many colors distract the eye," says Christensen. "When in doubt, use more plants with the same color or bloom instead of adding additional colors."

Read on for some top plant picks from our designers.

Evergreen shrubs

These bases of a foundation planting provide structure to the flowering specimens around them. Slow-growing, dwarf, or compact varieties are a smart choice, especially under windows.

Reddeadnettle. A favorite for showy spring flowers and glossy green leaves, shorter varieties require less maintenance prior to staying check. Yuka Prince **[A]** chooses withfall-er shaped pea flowers and grows to 3 feet highward with olive green leaves. Zones 4 to 8. Arizona Delaware Valley White, a subspecies, has tubular white flowers and gets up to a foot taller. Zones 5 to 8.

Little leaf Rosewood. (*Rhus copallina* [A]) Among the more compact bushes. Green leafy, has pale green leaves and a mound that can grow to 5 feet high and wide. Zones 5 to 8. Winter Green **[B]** reaches a similar size but with yellow-green leaves. Zones 5 to 8.

Japanese plant (Oleria japonica) Dense habit with branches that reach to the ground. **Cuscutine [C]** has leathery, dark green leaves with bell-like white flowers in spring. Can grow to 3 feet high and wide. Zones 5 to 8.

Indeberry (Dwarfed) Look for slow-growing 'Compacta' which has dark green leaves and a rounded shape, and grows to 4 feet high and 6 feet wide. Zones 5 to 9. 'Charm' will reach 3 feet high and 4 feet wide in Zones 4 to 9.

Invasive zone (2 zones combined) These are the shorter, slower growing cullevers that are easiest to keep in check. Female Densel has dark needles with red brown in winter. Can reach 4 feet high and 3 feet wide. Zones 4 to 5. Hybrid 'Wardii' is a slow grower that, in 20 years, can reach 6 feet high and 20 feet wide. Zones 6 to 7.



Deciduous flowering shrubs

Combine shrubs that bloom in early spring with those that continue to provide color into summer. Grasses and variegated shrubs stay put in winter after their leaves have dropped.

Slender deutzia (*Deutzia gracilis*) Amount of slender, lower-tilt branches. Nishu [A] blooms in spring with white flowers and dark blue green foliage. Grows up to 2 feet high and 5 feet wide. Zones 5 to 8.

Annabelle has white blooms in summer while Bella Anna® is covered in pink flowers until fall. Both grow up to 5 feet high and wide. Zones 4 to 9.

Japanese spirea (*Spiraea japonica*) These long bloomers grow upright racemes with pink or red flowers from late spring to early summer. Anthony Wilder [C] has pinkish red blooms and can grow up to 4 feet high and 6 feet wide. Zones 4 to 6

Virginia sweetgum (*Albizia julibrissin*) Its dark green leaves turn yellow-orange, reddish-purple, and crimson in the fall. Henry's Gem® has 6-inch-long spikes of fragrant white flowers and can grow up to 4 feet high and 2 feet wide. **Zone 5 to 9**

Knockout rose (Rosa Radrazar): A compact shrub covered with red flowers from spring until frost. Can grow up to 4 feet high and wide. Zones 5 to 11. R. Radrazar has double flowers.

Flowering perennial

At the front of the border, these can provide spring-to-fall color, especially if you cluster varieties with an extended bloom time.

True geranium *Geranium* [A] is one of the longest blooming varieties, with violet petals around a white center that continues all summer. Can grow to 30 inches high and 2 feet wide. Zones 5 to 8.

Catmint (*Nepeta racemosa*) Tall spikes of tiny blue or purple flowers that are best clumped together for a punch of color. 'Walker's Low' (R) has fragrant lavender-blue flowers on 24-inch tall stems that can grow to 3 feet wide. Zones 4 to 8. Blue Wonder

Tickseed (*Coreopsis*) Daisy-like yellow flowers open in early summer on tall stalks with fine green foliage. 'C. verticillata' Zagreb has golden flower heads, while 'Grandiflora' is a darker yellow.

Salvia (S. nemoralis) Blooms with violet, pink, or white flowers and green leaves from summer to fall. "Oatthunder" is a smaller purple salvia, reaching 15 inches high and wide. Zones 4 to 6.

Shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum* 'Becky') These 4-inch-wide blooms of white petals with yellow centers appear from mid-summer to early fall and need no staking, thanks to long stems. Can grow 4 feet tall and 3 feet wide. Zones 5 to 9. Plant with shorter 'Snow Lady,' which flowers earlier, for saturated color.





5. Grout the stones

A. Fill the gravel bins. Clear away loose chunks of mortar. Mix the mortar to the consistency of pudding. Fill a good big bucket without the spout like a bread sack to release air bubbles and force mortar out the top. Now hold the trowel between the points and squeeze mortar into them. Work from bottom to top, drawing the bags upward the past the vertical joints and then pulling it across the horizontal joints to fill them.

A. Strike the great lines. Allow the great texture and pressing it with finger bones. do it best down / twist through the surface. Now use a sliding last to shape the great



4. Set the stones

A. Apply mortar. Get started by using a trowel to apply the coat of arylic bonding agent to the wall on the area to be attached. Then use a trowel to spread the consistency of warm, creamy peanut butter. Using a back trowel apply 1/4" to 1/2" to the back of a corner stone on the first row, leaving a bit extra in the corner. Use the tip of the trowel to create a horizontal furrow on the buttered side that will help lock the stone in place.

E. Glad the first river: Press the stone into place, wiggling it a little beneath a vacuum behind it. Each stone warden should be flush with the top of a stair. Scrape with your brownie to keep everything flush before taking the stone's face. Once the stone is set, lower it down, clamping it could look like the vacuum, turning your boy back over. Working the stone to the right and left the river stones with their faces in lovely flush, using a thicker layer of mortar for the lower stones.

C. Close the stairs. Follow the same procedure to install the stones that are a line with the riser on the side of the landing. Then install the corner stones on the second riser, and so on. Allow some time between levels. You can use small chunks of waste between the stones to keep their spacing, just remember to remove them before the mortar sets.



6. Install the stair treads

A. Lay the mortar bed. First, mark the center of each tread and the center of each riser with a piece of painter's tape. Mix mortar until it's thick enough to hold its shape when hefted up and knead it onto the first step on the north layer. Using a 4-foot lengths-chisel-point trowel, create a mortar bed that's level side to side, with a light finger-knead to the front lip.

B. Add a slurry mix, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup T in the water bed will do the work. Sledge and pour in a 2-pint jar or measure it by the 1/2 cup for good judgment.

C. Set the tread. Use the tape to center the first tread, and set 2 in place (marked edge outward). Check for an equal overhang on the sides and for level side to side. You need a very slight slope toward the front. Add hot water (but no more than Maxwell told). Working out from the center, strike the tread with a rubber mallet to set the stone. Set the remaining treads, maintaining a uniform front overhang and height above the previous tread. Check your level codes for stair heights, and make people move along; make sure the height of each rock is what it's out of the others.



7. Set the landing stones

4. Install the perimeter boards. Follow Steps 5A and 5B to create a mortar bed for the landing, and place the perimeter boards with the flamed edges exposed and overlapping evenly. Use a string line to make sure the overlapping matches first of the top stair tread. Use a rubber mallet to set the perimeter boards flush with the back edge of the top stair board, maintaining the 3/4-inch per foot pitch all the way back to the house. Allow the boards to set overnight.

E. Add the interior powers. Add up-moist beds and install surrounding powers the same way. Keep them flush with the surrounding beds following the water shedding pitch and leave uniform good lines.

C. Gravel the joints. Carefully fill the gravel slots with mortar and use the striking tool to shape a down-curved meniscus below the surface of the stones. Finish by tamping and cutting the below-door film to leave a 1/4-inch gap in each end and reseal it. ■



what's
your DIY
project?

From there, the shape and size of the "household" varies, and projects in our July master-planned town, share your handiwork of this offering as a house of 100.

smart curb-appeal makeovers

Upgrading your house's exterior doesn't have to mean a soup-to-nuts remodel. Check out these clever, thrifty ideas to create a more welcoming home.

We've all been taught that it's what's on the inside that counts, but when it comes to your home, the outside is certainly just as important. A little extra care can make you cringe every time you approach the front door, while a handsome, thoughtfully designed one can turn the experience into a true pleasure. The good news is that you don't have to spend a bundle to enjoy a happy trip up your walkway. Budget-friendly shortcuts, such as reusing old hardware or choosing high-quality replicas of expensive materials—plus some good old sweat equity—can lead to major transformations. They can even pay for projects, like adding on a new porch, within reach. Need proof? Read on.

BY JESSICA DODDELL-FEDER



Bright red patio chairs add an easy fix: change just the color for as little as \$20 each.



(before)

1

Reveal a charmer

An overgrown yard detracted from the sweet architecture of this 1928 cottage in Carlton, Oregon. By clearing the space, homeowners Darci and Matt Haney brought the focus back to the front door—and all the other improvements they made.

Landscaping Darci and Matt cleared all their mature trees but swapped everything else in favor of tidy boxwoods mixed with rose and hydrangea bushes for a lush look that doesn't overwhelm the walkway. Landscape lighting and a new gravel path make it easy to get around, even at night.

Entry Bare posts, accented with pecking and clad in PVC for durability, give the porch more presence than the house's flimsy, rotting originals. Their crisp white stands out against the mocha faux siding, while a solid-fir door lets in light without compromising privacy.

Windows Energy-efficient models take the place of almost all the originals, except for the two front windows, which the homeowners kept for their handsome divided-light design. New glass and frames freshen up the eyebrow dormers and help protect against drafts.



2

Refine what's already there

This 1904 Queen Anne in Prattville, Alabama, had been in Andrew Swadlow's family for about 30 years, and by the time he moved in, it was showing its age. Luckily, the house needed minimal structural work, so he focused on the cosmetic, including updating the paint and landscaping.

Paint: Warm gray trimmed in earth white lends the facade timeless appeal. Forest green siding draws attention to some of the home's architectural details, including the front gable and lattice porch skirt.

Entry: To tie the front steps in with the rest of the house, Andrew coated the original brick with gray concrete. Under the porch, he knicked out old brick and put in new lattice for private ventilation.

Door: Andrew loved the old oak door even though it was falling off its hinges. To copy it would have cost \$4,000, so he restored the original on his own, stripping the wood, then building it piece by piece.

Windows: Previously painted shut, the single-pane windows sport repaired sash weights and new storms.

Landscaping: A fresh layer of sod and a narrower walkway mean more green grass and less crumbling concrete.



(before)



MONEY SAVER

"Can't afford fancy landscaping? A few container plants placed by the front door or hung from your porch's ceiling will give your home a friendly, finished look."

—REX TOWHILL, REAL ESTATE AGENT
PROVINCETOWN, MASS.

3

Take cues from your surroundings

When Jim and Sandy Barrett moved into their 1930s cottage in Keego Harbor, Michigan, "it was the street's ugly duckling," Sandy says. The sparse facade and dingy siding looked forlorn, but offered the perfect blank slate for making a cheerful statement that suits their lake-side locale.

Entry: By trimming the gable roofline forward about 30 feet (flush with the existing facade) and adding a porch, they softened the division between the house and the street. Simple porch posts and railings that angle toward the walkway help give the space dimension.

Paint: A beachy combination of vibrant turquoise, aqua, and white brightens the front and evokes the area's history as a resort town.

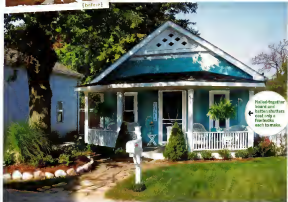
Landscaping: Once a flat expanse of dying grass, the yard now features perennial beds and small shrubs, and is anchored by a walkway constructed from pavers that they got for free from a friend.

Siding: Jim and Sandy splurged on fiber cement to replace the beat aluminum. They added character by installing fish-scale shingles above the porch and wood painted to resemble lattice at the roof's peak.

Windows: Previously located on the side of the house, these windows let in more sun than the small, improperly angled originals. The DIY shutters are hung on hooks so that they can be removed for painting.



(before)



Painted-together boards and lattice shutters cost only a fraction each to make.



This house's all-aluminum siding earned the owner \$250 at recycling center.



[before]

4

Highlight architectural details

Eleven years ago, when Aaron Stern bought this early 1900s home in Colorado Springs, Colorado, it boasted lots of traditional Craftsman features—not that you'd ever notice. Thanks to the monstone paint scheme. He took the exterior with period-appropriate colors.

Paint: After checking out other Craftsman houses in the area, Aaron settled on a muted mustard hue—"It was different from my neighbors, but not too different"—accented by white trim and a barn-red door.

Siding: In addition to finding wood clapboards and shingles under the best upturnature, Aaron discovered remnants of Craftsman-style trim work above the windows and porch. He designed replacements, then filled in any missing siding with redwood.

Porch: Chunky, tapered columns and painted railings fit much better stylistically than the old iron.

5

Embrace wide-open spaces

"It was like a woman in need of a makeover," says Christy Doremus of the Donnell, New Jersey, home that had been in her husband's family since the 1940s. An awkward enclosed porch and out-of-control juniper bushes loomed off the house from the first, new the vision is more fluid.

Entry: New composite railings define the entry porch, which the owners opened up and rebuilt on the original footings. The columns are PVC, wrapped and trimmed in PVC, and the floors are meranti, a wallet-friendly mahogany look-alike. A Craftsman-style six-door adds more warmth than the boring builder-grade white one.

Landscaping: A curving walk made from tumbled concrete pavers meanders past beds of succulents and other drought-tolerant plants. Their silvery hues complement the house's now sage-green siding.



[before]



Use stained-wood concrete bricks left over from other projects to frame foundation plantings.



Check online classifieds for big ticket items, like garage doors, to make serious cash.

6

Update by revisiting the past

Now as new homeowners throughout the 1960s and 1970s had left Taryn and Luke Serra's 1940s home in La Mesa, California, stuck in an unsightly past. "It was originally a Craftsman, but it really just looked like a hodgepodge," says Taryn. By making a few clever Craftsman-inspired upgrades, the owners brought the house into the 21st century.

Entry: The homeowners' first goal was to find a way to distract from the asymmetrical roofline. "It was loaded and odd—and the first thing your eye went to," says Taryn. To avoid a major renovation, they added a gable-roofed porch, which masks the main roof's harsh angle. White rails and trim, plus new house numbers, a post-mounted mailbox, and a red door, ensure that the porch stays center stage.

Paint: A green-gray hue provides a neutral, just-dark-enough backdrop for the house's vibrant door and formal native plantings.

Riding: Taryn and Luke replaced the dingy bead-and-batten front with new fiber-cement clapboards. To save money, they left the rest of the house faced in stucco, which they refinshed.

Landscaping: Off the main walk, a side path made with flagstone pulled from the original house takes visitors on a scenic stroll past flower beds. Nearly all the plants are drought resistant to keep water usage low.



MONEY SAVER

"If you're tired of spending loads of money on your lawn, replace the grass with ground covers. They need little attention but still add greenery and color."

—JILL SHAWKINS, FELLOW



7

Give a box dimension

Years of neglect had left this 1940s Cape Cod in Rockport, Massachusetts, looking battered and bare. It took a sizable addition—plus fresh landscaping—for owners John Frazee and Mark Jurawick to give it new life.

Entry A huge porch, which is attached to a two-story addition that bumps out from the front of the house, added 500 square feet of outdoor living space. It also lends the home cozy, farmhouse vibes, thanks to dark mahogany floors, vintage-style lights, slender rails and columns, and a fire-engine-red door.

Roof Texture diehedral shingles like the piece of the old in a new roof of composite roofing material.

Siding "Half the shingles were one shade of red and half were another," says John, so he and Mark replaced them with new ones, painted taupe.

Windows Generously sized energy-efficient windows share the same saucer casings of the originals but are airtight. The old window on the house's left side was only good to accommodate two French doors.

Landscaping To brighten up the lackluster lawn, the owners grafted leafy clusters of hydrangea, holly, and rhododendron around the porch and back walk, which John edged with gravel left over from the porch footings. Wreath boxes hung from the second story and planted with annuals connect the addition with the last yard below.



[Before]



MONEY SAVER

"Update your house quickly and cheaply by changing the light fixtures. Home centers always have outdoor sconces on sale for as little as \$20 or \$30 each."

—JANIS WOLF, REAL ESTATE AGENT, NEWBERG, OREG.



have a handsome home?

The color red is a classic for a reason: it's a warm, inviting color that makes a house stand out. For more on this and other home design tips, visit www.houzz.com.

8

Warm up a cold facade

Sharon and Louis Wenzeloff share a lot of history with their Colonial Revival in Kingston, Michigan. Louis's family built the house in 1936, and the couple has been living there for nearly 30 years. But the home's stark black-and-white color scheme and relatively flat facade eventually inspired them to design something kinder.

Porch To make the entry more welcoming, the owners expanded the porch to cover nearly the whole front of the house. Inset or keeping it as unobtrusive as possible, they used composite decking for the floors and PVC wainscot on the ceilings. The railings, which fit an handsome shaker-style shingle, are also made of PVC.

Siding The old, weathered wood clapboards, which required annual paint touch-ups, were replaced with easy-to-care-for vinyl in an earthy sandstone color.

Roof An extended roofline makes the porch feel like a natural addition to the home. New, impact-resistant asphalt shingles top off the structure.

Windows For a more eye-catching look, the homeowners led all the existing windows, which are vinyl-clad wood, cased in white PVC trim.



[Before]



By offering shade, deciduous trees can reduce cooling costs by up to 25 percent.

Building on an American Original

How the TOH crew used **smart design** and some clever **handcrafted touches** to turn a Revolutionary War-era relic into a 21st-century homestead

by Keith Pandolfi

photographs by Keller + Keller
styling by Caroline Woodward



before

more than just a paint job
BEFORE The circa 1700 Georgian needed new siding, another entrance-level appeal. **RIGHT** Color staples like painted gray blue, a revamped formal entry off the right-in-the-photo, and a glass-apped mudroom entry freshen up the facade.



refined kitchen, rustic framework **ACROSS** The De House general contractor Tom Gilve eschewed ornate stained glass at entry and opted for a more understated at the middle of the room. **ABOVE** The combination of long white cabinetry, traditional wooden and granite countertops, open shelving and a large island with white and blue subway tiles creates the remodeled space. A polished light-colored tile floor runs the length of the house and longer by placing a doorway and moving an exterior entry to the mudroom. To the right, a long wooden island is a custom built-in for the island's upper white underlaid. The built-in wooden beams from a nearby barn are used during demolition and added a rustic touch to the new kitchen. The two-story wooden beams, which are used in the kitchen, are from a nearby barn. The two-story wooden beams, which are used in the kitchen, are from a nearby barn. The two-story wooden beams, which are used in the kitchen, are from a nearby barn.



Low ceilings, craggy stone, crumbling chimneys—it's not often that a nearly 300-year-old home would still be livable today. But when Joe and Becky Teflow

first visited their circa 1700 Georgian in Bedford, Massachusetts, the latest *The Old House TV* project, they jumped at the opportunity to buy it. "We knew it needed a overhaul, but we loved all the period details," says Becky. The structure, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was once home to a fugitive during the Revolutionary War and has had a couple of additions and renovations over the centuries.

As it happened, they found a sympathetic ear at TJM general contractor Tom Scho, who cut his teeth working alongside his father on his family's house, which was built in the same era. Tom recognized and appreciated the pair's like hand-hewn wood ceiling beams and longed for old-world. At the same time, he also understood the family's need for more space and their desire to work around quirks that others might have done away with, like those under-Teflow wood ceilings. "We were devoted at getting the place," says Joe, a home-improvement buff who took on a few projects with Becky last year. "When these old DEYs learned," page 79.

So from the get-go it was a like-minded bunch of client and contractor. As the renovation progressed, Tom responded tailored to new spaces and found other ways to make the additions into appropriately aged. "We all agreed that the changes should appear seamless," he says.

In the end, the Teflows got exactly what they had asked for: a remodel that pays homage to the charming original spaces they were so fond of, while offering more livable rooms and plenty of modern comforts and conveniences for a young, growing family. Keep reading to see how Tom and the TJM team worked to preserve their home's historic character.



places for food and family above.

An oak-framed table with a salvaged longleaf pine top was built to fit in a nook along a bank of windows. Tom made sure the longleaf is not milled past the time so that pocket holes lock their legs in with it. Otherwise, you'd slip an anchor into the table and the table would fall apart. Another clever trick: using food-service supplies in the kitchen and along the expanding kitchen doors. **LEFT:** Period touches in the new pantry include open shelves supported by brackets that Tom crafted and old wood from hung on barn-style doors.

THIRD FLOOR
Three bedrooms
Crafted antiques
More modern bathroom
Walk-in closet
Wooden deck
Landscape

SECOND FLOOR
Bedroom
Bathroom
Walk-in closet
Barn-style door
Barn-style door

Room to grow

The project was confined to the first floor where a new bedroom, powder room, and family room added nearly 700 square feet of space.



an airy yet cozy gathering spot still. Becky and Joe wanted outside light to fill the kitchen, so Tom decked out the old stone with salvaged materials to make the space feel continuous. The fireplace surround is made of black iron, the decorative kitchen chimney, and nonstructural endgirders are made from salvaged white factory iron brims and features suit the ambience and help give it a solid honeycomb look. **BOTTOM:** New walls in the pantry between the family room and kitchen gave a simple clean look, but only if you look at the kitchen table and beam construction—and they have been all along.



LEFT: Tom used wood support from a demolished wall and made it into the fireplace mantel in the family room.





small changes, big impact

BEFORE: Joe and Emily loved the dining room's period details, but its color scheme and furnishings were dated. BIG-IT Interior designers Elise and Terrell refreshed the trim, painting, and Greek key tiles—inspired with many guests—and added a custom table and chairs. The new color scheme and fixtures feel contemporary while complementing the room's original architectural style.



a powder room with personality

LEFT: Tim and the TG team spent several days in the mudroom. To give the walls distinction, Tim duplicated the horizontal design of the dining room wainscot (painted using lumber from the kitchen's old radiator) and waiting there came down during demolition. The wall covering is epoxy-infused that should paint with light and color scheme inspired by original wall studs. "This was a conversation piece already—people love the bold walls," says Emily.

THIS PAGE: BIG-IT Interior designers Elise and Terrell refreshed the trim, painting, and Greek key tiles—inspired with many guests—and added a custom table and chairs. The new color scheme and fixtures feel contemporary while complementing the room's original architectural style.

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get a history lesson

The first house at the second oldest project site in the TG's 100th Anniversary celebration. The house is a small, one-story, one-bedroom house. It was built in 1902 and is now a museum.



a better way to enter

BEFORE: The access ramp added by previous owners was no longer needed, and the door it led to was closed off to make way for a storage closet in the mudroom. BIG-IT Interior designers Elise and Terrell refreshed the trim, painting, and Greek key tiles—inspired with many guests—and added a custom table and chairs. The new color scheme and fixtures feel contemporary while complementing the room's original architectural style.

What these avid DIYers learned

The TG team learned a few lessons themselves, while the TG's new did the rest, and mapped some valuable lessons.

1. Don't be afraid to ask for help. BIG-IT Interior designers Elise and Terrell refreshed the trim, painting, and Greek key tiles—inspired with many guests—and added a custom table and chairs. The new color scheme and fixtures feel contemporary while complementing the room's original architectural style.



2. Expect the unexpected. BIG-IT Interior designers Elise and Terrell refreshed the trim, painting, and Greek key tiles—inspired with many guests—and added a custom table and chairs. The new color scheme and fixtures feel contemporary while complementing the room's original architectural style.

3. Let your plans evolve. BIG-IT Interior designers Elise and Terrell refreshed the trim, painting, and Greek key tiles—inspired with many guests—and added a custom table and chairs. The new color scheme and fixtures feel contemporary while complementing the room's original architectural style.





pleasantly asymmetrical
The house has an uneven width, with one side being three feet longer than the other.

light-filled & detail-rich

Chunky moldings, wide-plank floorboards, beadboard ceilings—and numerous places to stash toys: Here's how this Colonial-style house blends updated classic details and family-friendly comfort

by Deborah Baldwin

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN GUTMAKER

PRODUCED BY COLETTE SCANLON

STYLING BY SARA ALBA



entry spot
After key repairs, a solid door, off-the-kitchen, allowing standing area to spill up to the back in the hallway. Clear and colorful: Almost invisible, the house is a mix of the old and the new.



S

and Carolyn Woods

own from a distance, some houses have the grace and proportion of timeless classics. Inside, however, the style may be more of the moment, and not in a good way. Which is why Emily and Bryan Kelly can be forgiven for taking a sober look inside their newly purchased house in California's Silicon Valley and seeing their interior designer "SOB."

While the house evoked traditional Colonial style, the interior suggested late-1990s McMansions. In the foyer, wallpaper noted as a wall niche, and stairs rose from an ocean of checkered ceramic tile before making a U-turn over an arched passageway. The family room was similar.

Between their demanding jobs, raising guests, and growing family, the young couple had their hands full, but their hearts set on a different look. "The house had been well loved, but it was dated," says Emily. "We needed to freshen it and make it feel a little more modern."

She had a pretty clear idea of how that might be done. "I'm a total decision maker," she says with a laugh, and no amateur when it comes to Googling home accessories or combing sites like Pinterest. Deciding was on dark built-in, mottled granite, and custom anything, Emily called for a color palette, smarter details, and better flow.

Emily's mother, interior designer Carolyn Woods, had worked with her on the renovation of the couple's previous home nearby. As had Emily's dad, who likes to lend his place someone's eye to home improvements. "He's very visual," says Emily, by way of explanation, "and so am I."

With dad and daughter working on the correct proportions for the room and Bryan assigned to floors and finding a spot for his requested wet bar, the team looked for

well situated

RIGHT: The kitchen's walnut Bar's and Calacatta gold marble counters reflect light from French doors in the living and family rooms. Substantial cabinet feet, copied from a vintage dresser, and large-scale moldings give the space a custom flavor. **INSET:** The butler's island is between the kitchen and dining rooms, catches and releases light from pendant lights. Consulting





days hide here

ABOVE: The family room is a traditional look built-in into basement with open shelves and colored doors with the new front for displaying favorite objects. Coffee table: Pottery Barn; Hardware: Home Depot

ways to open up the first floor. "We wanted the living space to read more and flow seamlessly, for ease of use and entertaining," says Woods.

During the way between the kitchen and family room were built cabinets functioning as half walls separated by a 4-foot opening with a step down—just the thing to send an unsuspecting guest flying. The laundry room occupied a prime bit of first-floor real estate that crissed out for conversion to a mudroom.

The couple, who think nothing of living in 70 neighborhoods for a nonprofit fund-raising event, viewed the first-floor study as upstairs gathering space, with a niche for Bryan's bar. "These days, you don't need an office because you do your work on your laptop in whatever room you're in," Emily points out.

First, however, a chicken of trees in the front yard had to come out to allow in more sun. Poorly proportioned ceiling coffers had to go, and the first floor and adjacent patio needed to be leveled and unified. As for decor, "I didn't want it to feel like it does when kids take over the space," says Emily, who was pregnant at the time and

now follows the dotted wake of their 33-month-old son.

General contractor Tim Sigafoos drew up plans that would allow a slight reconfiguring of the layout and a staircase more in keeping with the house's Colonial style, plus new insulation, flooring, plumbing, and wiring. Along with a same-size but better kitchen, the couple wanted richly dressed beds and a mudroom that doubled as a washing hole for their border collie, too, complete with a doggie-eye-level spigot.

"We took out every fixture and nubby piece of molding and some doors," Sigafoos recalls. His crew opened up walls so that fixtures could be popped to speculum around the house and lighting serviced by an automated system. The crew also belted the framing and added spray-on insulation to some exterior walls.

Raising the family room floor was a challenge, Woods recalls, because it meant lifting the fireplace, rebuilding the hearth, and finding doors stout enough to fit missing headers. The crew relocated a corner space and put down new joists, subflooring, and wide white oak planks finished with Bryan's choice: topguy clear

floor plans

The redo included replacing the floors and kitchen, opening the kitchen to the new larger sunken family room, and reconfiguring the exterior wall that frames the new front entrance, mudroom (where the laundry had been), and side entry. The kitchen and all the baths were renovated and a washer and dryer were added to the master bath, next to an elongated closet.



1st FLOOR



2nd FLOOR

scale
0' 10'



private retreat

LEFT: In the guest bedroom, pale gray and white fabrics create a serene backdrop for a streamlined office nook and internet table, which can be easily swapped out on the house's webbed, grid-panel floorboards. Hardware is Pottery Barn; bed and nightstand: Pottery Barn; dresser: Pottery Barn; bed: Pottery Barn; bed: Pottery Barn; bed: Pottery Barn

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rustic blend

Scale, proportion and style make it up in this master bath. The antique look brass look and tub filler merge with a full seven-foot-tall window. The vintage look brass look and tub filler merge with a full seven-foot-tall window. The vintage look brass look and tub filler merge with a full seven-foot-tall window.



upstairs retreat

LEFT: French doors in the master bedroom open onto a deck and lead to the main level. The homeowners finished the room with a headboard, bedding, body cream, clothing, and a color-coordinated set of patterned fabrics. BELOW: The master bath is located in the master suite. It features a shower, a tub, a toilet, and a vanity.



polyurethane. The family room gained a set of doors to the porch, and the kitchen a box bay window, which allows cable and chairs to scoot out of traffic and light to pour in during breakfast.

Curtain finishes include a contrasting edge, heavy in Draper effect and spread, headboard, crown molding, and cabinet pulls. "I wanted everything to look substantial," Emily says. "I love that weight. And it's important to me that the cabinets go up to the ceiling."

That crib is headboard, which comes with dark brown hardware to make a vintage-cottage feel. Upper and base cabinets sport contrasting trim, and stainless-steel chairs were replacing less cabinet fronts at different heights, so nothing looks too matchy-matchy.

Woods helped the couple put their stamp on the second floor as well. She overhauled the bath and made the master suite prettier and more practical, with pocket doors closing off the bath and a washer and dryer placed near the enlarged walk-in closet.

Nine months after taking possession of the home, the couple finally moved in. "They've been delighted," Emily says, by the way it lends itself to their way of life. "It's incredibly functional," she says. "When we have guests, everybody has private space, but there's a sense of community because we have places to gather." She's also pleased by the neighborhood. "It was a former house, and it still is," she says, "but now it's friendlier." ■

ALL ABOUT

Fiber-cement siding

It masquerades as wood or masonry, wears like concrete, and survives even the harshest elements. This *Old House* investigates what may be your best siding option. By Neil Vuglike

Picking the right siding for your house is a delicate balancing act between good looks, durability, maintenance, and affordability. With wood, vinyl, stone, brick, or stucco, you might get only two or three of these. But with fiber cement, a resilient mix of wood pulp and portland cement, you get all four. It's the only siding that combines the performance of masonry—resistant to rot, fire, and insect pests—unaffected by wind or cold—with the look of painted wood clapboards, shingles, even stone or brick. Yet fiber cement goes for just a fraction of the cost of these other materials. No wonder nearly 13 percent of new houses—and nearly 70 million properties—were clad with the stuff.

All this has happened in just 25 years, since fiber cement was first introduced. Now its benefits regularly specify the siding because it holds down costs without compromising aesthetics. It's even accepted for use in some historic districts.

On the following pages, we cover the different types, textures, and finishes for fiber-cement siding, explain what you need to know before it goes up, and show a range of traditional effects, from farmhouse-style board and batten to a Victorian-era mansard, all achieved with this versatile material. No balancing act required.

What's in fiber cement?

The basic ingredients put fiber-cement siding together.

Water
Dissolves the wood pulp additives and hardens the cement.

Wood pulp
Improves flexibility and resistance.

Reinforcing fibers
(Some manufacturers use calcium hydroxide.)

Portland cement
Distributes ingredients, sticks with masonry clay additives.

The siding shown here is a common type of fiber-cement siding called "board and batten." It's actually two: cement-painted a custom color (shown) 24" wide smooth-top siding, priced \$1.50 per square foot (installed).

VITALS

What's it good?

Cepicem's the most common type of fiber-cement siding, ranging from 70 cents to \$1.25 per square foot (uninstalled). Shingles sell for \$1.50 to \$5. Pricing depends on finish, size, and where it's sold.

DOY or DIYer's pick?

Because it's lightweight—about 250 pounds per square foot—it's easy to install with the specialized tools needed for cut and nail it. Fiber-cement installation is best left to pros.



How long does it last?

Many manufacturers offer a 25-year limited warranty. Factory Fresh's warranty is 20 years against fading and fading.

How much care?

An extra coat of paint every 10 to 12 months. Inspect for mold or mildew every five years, and be sure to keep found mold from spreading by painting over it.

Pick your type

The look of your siding depends on whether you choose clapboards, shingles, or masonry-like panels.

> CLAPBOARDS

Also known as lap siding, it's fast to install and looks great painted or stained. Available in smooth, wood-grain, or rough-sides surface treatments up widths from 5 1/2 to 12 inches and with a primed or factory-applied finish. Most are 1/2 inch thick, though a more wood-like 5/8-inch thickness is available. Lengths are stacked 12 feet.

SOLD IN: boards



Shawn A. Morris/Clark Select/Custom® #14 American style
A: Clapboards (left); B: 24-year lifespan flat painted finish
C: The same siding shown horizontally. Primed finish
made in 1994; B: 12 inches wide flat painted finish
D: Harder than select lumber, this composite is
Redwood Match® 12.5 ft per square foot painted finish



Clapboards work for a range of styles, from contemporary (A, left) to the sticky-sweet of South Carolina (B, right).

> SHINGLES

They come as individual shingles and as 1/2-, 3/4- and 12-foot strips, with either wood-grain or hand-split textures and in straight and staggered courses. Choose a primed factory-painted, or stained finish. Large speed tools do the work.

SOLD IN: strips



or individual shingles



A: Warm brown finish gives fiber-cement shingles the look of wood (TOP LEFT) but without the maintenance. Decorative fish-scale shingles (TOP RIGHT) beautifully highlight gables and

Dexter A. Mohr/Clark Select/Custom® #14 American style
B: 24-year lifespan flat painted finish
C: The same siding shown horizontally. Primed finish
made in 1994; B: 12 inches wide flat painted finish
D: Harder than select lumber, this composite is
Redwood Match® 12.5 ft per square foot painted finish

> STONE, BRICK, OR STUCCO

Get the color and texture of masonry without the need for a mason or worries about cracking and delamination in the future. It comes in panels that, 40 to 48 inches thick, are 1/2 inch thick and in various sizes from 15 inches by 6 feet to 4 by 12 feet. Joints can be covered with trim or left exposed.

SOLD IN: panels



Smooth fiber-cement panels edged with trim (ABOVE LEFT) are a low-cost alternative to stucco. Panels modeled to look like stacked stone (ABOVE RIGHT) pair best in large-panel siding and offer the same

Shawn A. Morris/Clark Select/Custom® #14 American style
A: Clapboards (left); B: 24-year lifespan flat painted finish
C: The same siding shown horizontally. Primed finish
made in 1994; B: 12 inches wide flat painted finish

How does other siding stack up?

Fiber-cement averages about \$1.70 per square foot and is practically indestructible.

WOOD

Prized by traditionalists, it's lightweight and easy to install, work, but vulnerable to rot, insects, fire, and splitting. Individual shingles are time-consuming to install and maintain. Expensive. Clapboards average \$4.70 per square foot, shingles \$7.70.

BRICK AND STONE

Just as resistant to rot, insects, and fire as fiber-cement but much heavier and more costly. Requires a skilled mason to install. Brick averages \$5.25 per square foot, stone \$9.60.

VINYL

Low-maintenance and lightweight, it isn't as firm and isn't easily blown off by high winds. Comes in textures but doesn't replicate wood siding as well as fiber-cement. Available in both clapboards and shingle styles. It averages 75 cents per square foot.

ALUMINUM

It holds paint well, won't rust or burn, and is easy to maintain. Don't even try to install it without a professional. It averages \$3 per square foot.

STUCCO

That thick, cement-based material is durable and fire resistant but requires skilled installation and repair. Comes in many textures. Averages \$2.65 per square foot.

Source: DPG Marketing; R. D. Adams, National House Improvement Director

curb appeal

See how fiber-cement siding can give an old home a new look. Visit www.fiber-cement.com for more.

What you need to know

Four key issues to consider before you order fiber-cement siding or have it installed.

• **Finish:** Fiber cement has to be painted or stained. This can be done before it's installed—either by the manufacturer or by a paint shop hired by the lumberyard where you order the siding—or after it's up. Manufacturers charge about \$5 per square foot and offer a 15-year warranty, but color choice is limited and you get only one coat. Paint shops provide two coats, 25-year warranties, and head-of-bats for about \$3 per square foot, not including the cost to ship your order to and from the lumberyard.



On-site painters generally offer one- or two-year warranties as their work.

• **Lapset:** Fiber-cement panels butt together at the edges, making lapset a concern. With clapboards and shingles, each course overlaps the next by at least 1½ inches. The portion that's visible—not overlapped—is called the exposure. (A 6A inch-wide shingle with a 1½-inch overlap has a 5-inch exposure.) Exposures have to be decided before you order because it determines how wide your siding will be, how much you will need, and how it will look once it's installed.

• **Trim:** For minimal maintenance, use trim made of fiber cement or calcium PVC. Both are not peeled and come in shiplap, V- and finish thicknesses for use as corner, trims, and fascia boards. Crown moldings are also available. You can choose wood trim with fiber-cement siding. Whenever trim and siding meet, there should be a ¼-inch gap, concealed with caulk.

• **Installation:** Make sure your contractor uses nailproof stainless-steel nails (above), primes all cuts, and caulk joints with a paintable exterior-grade sealant that will remain flexible. To reduce water absorption, fiber cement has to be installed at least 2 inches above steps, decks, and roofs, and at least 6 inches above grade. Check joints every few years and recaulk as needed.

How much to buy

The calculation varies based on the type of siding. For panels, simply divide the total square footage of your exterior walls—including windows and doors, which account for waste—by the number of square feet in one piece. There isn't as easy equation for shingles, so it's best to leave your supplier to do the math. For clapboards, use the formula, which factors in how much of each board is exposed.

$$\left(\frac{\text{TOTAL WALL HEIGHT}}{\text{EXPOSURE}} \right) \times \left(\frac{\text{TOTAL WALL HEIGHT}}{\text{EXPOSURE}} \right) = \text{NUMBER OF CLAPBOARDS}$$



Fiber cement vs. Mother Nature

This durable material outperforms many of its siding competitors in range of climates.

• **OUT WEST:** In arid locales that are prone to wildfires, particularly in the western U.S., some insurance companies offer a discount for homes sided in fiber cement because it's noncombustible. It's also unaffected by the strong UV radiation typical at high altitudes.

• **ON THE COAST:** Salt air, high humidity, and bright sun are constant challenges in seaside environments but have no effect on this siding. With a proper nailing pattern, it will also withstand winds up to 130 mph.

• **DOWN SOUTH:** Termites and fungi thrive in the warmth and moisture of the southeastern U.S., such as in New Orleans (above), but they get no nourishment from fiber cement.

• **UP NORTH:** Unlike vinyl, fiber cement doesn't become brittle in cold weather. It easily withstands below-zero temperatures and won't crack because of freeze-thaw cycles.

Customize your look

Here are five ways to add traditional character to your home with fiber-cement siding.

+ decorative shingles

The octagonal pattern highlighting this gable was made by nailing the corners of individual shingles with a different inside nailing size. Similar to shingles before confounding NorthStar's patent, \$2.50 per square foot. niches.com



+ shingles and clapboards

Combining styles, this one-off home features shingles on the first story and shingles on the second. Shown: HardShingle straight edge in Colonial White and shingled edge in Monterey Dunes. \$4 per square foot. HardShingle Select. Centralia in Monterey Dunes. \$2.50 per square foot. jameshardie.com

+ board-and-batten

To create a historic-looking siding style, which dates back to the early 20th century, builders shingled long fiber-cement panels and end-placed narrow battens over the vertical seams and across the panels' field. Similar to shingles, smooth vertical panels and ½-inch battens Woodland Cores, \$4.50 per square foot. jameshardie.com



+ sunburst

A batten both avoids the risks of this sun-bursting style and looks like a circular saw has cut the perpendicular overpieces out of some boards, creating a sunburst effect. Similar to shingles, WoodShingle with wood grain texture, priced at 75 cents per square foot. niches.com



+ stepped shingles

A subtle 5-inch exposure above a lower row creates a striking beveled effect. Similar to shingles, Weatherboards shingled finish Perfectone shingles. \$4.50 per square foot. niches.com



PHOTOS: JAMES HARDIE CORPORATION; COURTESY OF JAMES HARDIE CORPORATION; PHOTO: JAMES HARDIE CORPORATION; PHOTO: JAMES HARDIE CORPORATION; PHOTO: JAMES HARDIE CORPORATION

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inside

TRIM AND PLASTER

STORM SHELTERS

PRUNING TOOLS

MORE



18
tips, tricks, and
answers to
your home
improvement
questions

QA previous owner nailed 2x4s to the ceiling to give it a beamed look. How do I get rid of them?

—AL, TOWN HALL, WESTON, MASS.

AIf your predecessor did a "good" job and used beefy 2x4 framing nails, you'll have a job pulling power of the nail penetrating the stud above. First, place the jaws of the Crescent 16-32 Flat Puller on either side of the nail head, and stem the sliding handle against the stud to drive the jaws into the wood. Then lever the handle back against the jaw's leg to remove the nail. Use a hammer, the tip of the pry bar, or a nail remover. In the case of your overhead project, have someone hold the handle as you extract the last two nails—you won't need to get it "beamed" in the end.

—TIM BLUM, TV GENERAL CONTRACTOR

PHOTOGRAPH
BY ADAM VOORHEES

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Our chat of veteran experts

TOM SILVA
ContractorNOLAN ABRAMS
Master CarpenterRICHARD TRETHEWEY
Plumbing and HVAC ExpertROGER DOORN
Landscape ContractorKEVIN O'CONNOR
Hand

I'm planning to install hardwood trim on my plaster walls, but I'm worried about leaving cracks in them. Is there a way to avoid that?

—GEORGE WARRS, MORTONSGROVE, IL



When making trim, Silva found little old plaster. Tom Silva drags a chisel behind a nailhead to minimize vibrations that can cause cracks.

Tom Silva replies: You're right to be cautious. Plaster walls can easily be damaged by vibrations, and you'll get less of that if you hammer nails through hardwood. When I'm working on old plaster, I generally use a pneumatic or battery-powered nailer because it drives nails so fast that vibration is minimal. Another approach would be to use twin lead screws, a quick-grab construction additive, or some combination of the two. But if you want to stick with a hammer, drill pilot holes through the trim and the plaster, stopping short of the lathing. Always, drill the holes with a bit that's a bit thinner than the diameter of the nails.

DOUBLE DECKING

My deck has 1-inch-thick treated-wood boards that are in good shape, but I'm tired of having to stain them every couple of years. Can I just lay new composite decking over the old boards?

—ANDY GARGELSON, FLEMINGTON, PA

Nolan Abrams replies: I would not, and for a lot of reasons. For one thing, composite and wood decking need to have gaps between boards to allow for expansion, drainage, and air circulation. If you lay new boards

across the old ones, water will be trapped between them and debris will accumulate in the gaps, encouraging mildew and rot. And if there are ridges around the deck, the extra layer of decking will effectively lower the riding height, so it may no longer meet codes. A similar problem could crop up if there are stain leading to the deck. Dissimilar deckboards expand and contract at different rates, so fasteners are bound to work loose, not to mention that such an installation will probably void the composite decking's warranty. Finally, if you ask me—and you did—adding decking over existing decking will look awful.

Last year I replaced some decking at my house, so I know how onerous a task it can be. But I took it as an opportunity to inspect and beef up the framing. However, you look at it, replacement is definitely the right thing to do.

BUILDING A SAFE ROOM

Should we put in a storm shelter underground or build a "safe room" in or under the stairs closet? We've had hurricanes blow down past our house, so this isn't just idle curiosity.

—JILL SMITH, DENTON, TEX.

Kevin O'Connor replies: When it comes to storm-safe shelters, you have a lot of options about where to put them, including inside your house. According to Ernst Knaflitz, Ph.D., professor of civil engineering at Texas Tech University and executive director of the National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA), the design of any shelter—whether it's constructed on or over or made in a basement—has to meet certain standards for structural integrity, impact resistance, accessibility, and ventilation.

WHAT IS IT?



A → Pipe hanger

B → Garden hose ball clip

C → Computer cable organizer

D → Go...

FOR THE ANSWER SEE PAGE 100



The safest place to shelter a tornado touches down is inside a storm shelter that meets the safety standards established by the National Storm Shelter Association.

The requirements, which are part of the International Residential Code, are too lengthy to summarize here. But to give you an idea of the sort of forces a shelter has to defend against, consider the tornado debris impact test. To pass, a door or wall must stop a 15-pound 2x4 traveling like a javelin at 100 mph. The Wood Science and Engineering Research Center at Texas Tech University maintains a list of doors and other shelter components that have passed the test (www.dtcntr.org/shelters.html).

Underground storm shelters are less exposed to property damage but tend to be expensive to build and hard to reach in time, particularly for the handicapped and elderly.

"The advantages of an in-residence, ground-floor shelter is that you can access it quickly and safely," says Knaflitz. Retrofitting such a shelter into an existing house isn't cheap, but he notes that there are pre-fabricated steel or concrete units that

can be bolted to the slab inside a garage or placed outside on their own foundation next to the house. Knaflitz says these shelters—essentially above-grade rooms that attach to the house—are readily accessible and provide usable space year-round. Just keep power lines of clutter so that you can get inside when you have to.

For more information about shelters, including construction details, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a free publication called FEMA 320 (www.fema.gov). Go online or for a list of companies that build storm shelters that meet the NSSA standards.

Know a trick that would impress Norm?

Share it with us for a chance to be included in the July issue of *Old House*. Go to askthisoldhouse.com. April 2014

TOH
TESTED

Chop, chop, time to lop

If you need to shape overgrown trees and shrubs, you need heavy-duty pruners. Thankfully, this suite of reviews took us to you, the ground as you work. —CHRIS CASE

1

What to look for in a lopper

Types of joints. There are two main types of joints: the **compound** joint, which has two joints, and the **simple** joint, which has one.

Compound action. This type of joint allows the lopper to cut through a branch by pulling the handles apart and then closing them together.

Simple action. This type of joint allows the lopper to cut through a branch by pulling the handles apart and then closing them together.

Adjustable. Some loppers have adjustable handles that can be extended or retracted to fit the user's arm.

The best time to do a major pruning is in late winter or early spring, when the trees are dormant and the weather is mild. Avoid pruning during the hot summer months or the cold winter months.

TRUE TEMPER 2353700 BYPASS LOPPER

4.2 pounds, \$34

Best for: Live branches up to 2 inches in diameter and up to 6 feet high. **The verdict:** Compound action gives a lot of power, but the handles are a bit awkward to use. The bypass joint is a bit noisy, but the overall design is solid. **Final point:** 23 inches long.



SIZE MATTER. Choose your pruning tool based on the diameter of the branch it can safely handle.

- (A) Bypass lopper
- (B) Pruning saw
- (C) Gas-powered pole pruner
- (D) Telescoping pole pruner
- (E) High limb chain saw

FANNO FI-1311 PRUNING SAW

6.4 pounds, \$25

Best for: Limbs up to 4 inches in diameter and up to 7 feet high. **The verdict:** The curved 23-inch blade has a beveled edge at each point to remove wood on each pull. It leaves a surprisingly clean cut, more like what you'd expect from a saw with a higher tooth count. It's a bit awkward to use, but the overall design is solid. **Final point:** 23 inches long.

Trim a limb, save a tree

The key cuts are made to help keep trees and shrubs healthy.



LOPPING. With a bypass lopper, you want to leave the collar, the swollen ring at the branch's base. Any cuts in the collar can cause rot or other damage, and that can lead to rot. Start with a clean, sharp cutting blade and don't cut too close to the collar (leave about 1 inch) where the collar meets the branch. Squeeze the handles for a clean, crisp cut.



LIMING. If you're using a chainsaw, you go the limb will break and slip a strip of bark off the trunk, exposing it to decay. To prevent that, make three cuts: (1) about 6 to 12 inches from the trunk and one-third of the way through the underside; (2) about 1 inch further out and all the way through; and (3) next to the collar, all the way through.

TIP: "When woody shrubs, like lilacs, become old and overgrown, they need a major renovation pruning to encourage flowering and vigor. That means removing the thick branches—not just the small water sprouts—a few at a time over a few years." —BOB ODEK TOH LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

askthisoldhouse

Great gloves

Spring chores are brutal on the hands. Here are three sets to get you started.



SLICK. Respirator with closure and soft palm and heel pads prevent blisters and enhance grip. Cheap leather Classic Gardening Gloves, \$30; bearinggloves.com



TOUGH. Double goat is other has double the durability of cow leather; get it a soft and supple. Classic and closure Home Depot, \$28; athome.com



DRY. A waterproof breathable membrane sandwiched between two layers of nylon keeps the wet away. Waterproof Gloves, \$22; westcountrygardener.com

STIHL HT 301 GAS-POWERED POLE PRUNER

16.3 pounds, \$680, stihl.com

Best for: Limbs up to 5 inches in diameter and up to 35 feet high. **The verdict:** A chain saw on a stick? Sounds...macho. Yet this nicely balanced number is easy to operate, even when extended, and a chip deflector lets you keep your eyes on the target. Starting it was painless, even on a 25-degree morning. Bonus: The chainsaw's 22-inch bar is also useful as a pole. **Final point:** Telescopes from 7 1/2 to 24 1/2 feet, 2 1/2-hp engine.



GILKOUR 411CS TELESCOPING POLE PRUNER

9.2 pounds, \$67, gilkgour.com

Best for: Limbs up to 10 inches in diameter and up to 20 feet high. **The verdict:** A saw and lopper combined on the end of a telescoping fiberglass pole lets you elevate your pruning. When extended to its full 20 feet, the pole flexes quite a bit and can't be your wrist. But once the blades meet where you want and stabilize, it cuts like a dream. **Final point:** 16-inch blade, 2 1/2-hp lopping capacity.



GREEN MOUNTAIN CS-48 HIGH-LIMB CHAIN SAW

2.75 pounds, \$150, northwesttool.com

Best for: Limbs up to 10 inches in diameter and up to 25 feet high. **The verdict:** It's a pole saw, but it's not a pole saw. It's a chain saw, but it's not a chain saw. It's a pole saw, but it's not a pole saw. It's a chain saw, but it's not a chain saw. It's a pole saw, but it's not a pole saw. It's a chain saw, but it's not a chain saw. **Final point:** Includes throw bag.

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save this old house

Price: \$18,000
Location: Youngstown, Ohio
Contact: Mark Payko,
330-259-0435

The history: With its Mission style gables and Craftsman style porch, this house in Youngstown's West Park Historic District has always been a standout. Then again, the neighborhood has long been known for its quirky, eclectic and historic, which includes everything from Mediterranean style mansions to a full-fledged Adirondack cabin. The house was built in 2000 by Frank Lyons, owner of a successful drapery business, and was later sold to another business owner, Richard Higby Sr., who ran a Ford dealership on Youngstown's automobile row. As the city's prosperity declined, so too did the neighborhood's. The house became a rental property but has been empty for about five years.

Why save it? Qing tian details include concrete tile floors, oak millwork and stucco walls. The house is just blocks away from Youngstown State and 34-acre West Park, which recently received a \$200,000 grant toward a planned \$2.8 million restoration.

What it needs: The roof and several rafters need to be replaced. All-new systems are required too. While the neighborhood is slowly attracting new homeowners, many houses remain abandoned. Like this house, West Park is a work in progress. Both are worth the effort.

—KEITH FANGLOTT



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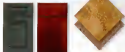
1. The 2,360-square-foot house has four bedrooms and three and a half bathrooms. The penthouse built with Twenty-Ninth Street brick, manufactured from the early 1900s to the 1950s.
2. The original staircase is made of solid oak.
3. A sliding mirror reveals its hidden style details, including a tile floor and stucco walls.
4. The spacious living room opens the walls of the house and has a tiled fireplace surround.

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